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SUBJECT: DARFUR: AUGUST 10 AU DITF BRIEFING HIGHLIGHTS
GOS ATTACKS AND UNCERTAINTY ABOUT AMIS FUTURE

REF: ADDIS ABABA 2130

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: At an August 10 briefing AU officials reported that the situation in Darfur was "relatively calm" despite serious incidents in northern Darfur (Sector 6), including several alleged attacks by GOS aircraft on an IDP camp and a village, and a suspension of AMIS activities near Kutum due to unspecified joint military operations between the GOS and SLM/A Minni Minawi's forces. AU officials, who underscore the need for sustained political engagement with non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), report that the GOS is deliberately conducting military attacks against non-signatories. With regard to other post-DPA activities, the AU continues to await for Sudan to submit a revised plan to disarm the Janjaweed; and, Japan has pledged USD 8.6 million for the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation. In the absence of any new PSC decision on the mandate of AMIS, AU military planners say the mission is now logistics-driven and warn that some troop contributing countries may consider withdrawing. NATO will begin airlifting rotating troops on September 1, and is proceeding with planning as if no changes to AMIS will occur until later. The deployment of partner experts to AMIS Forward Joint Mission Headquarters has proceeded, despite delays since June in the AU's appointment of a Joint Chief of Staff to oversee them. (Note: No DITF briefing was held August 17, but partners and AU officials met that day with troop contributing countries who all agreed that September rotations should go forward as planned. End Note.) END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) Poloffs attended an August 10 briefing by the African Union Commission's Darfur Integrated Task Force (AU DITF) to the AU Partners Liaison Group (chaired by the EC, and comprised of Canada, the US, UK, UN, and NATO).

SECURITY: CALM EXCEPT NORTH DARFUR

¶3. (SBU) DITF Military Component chief Colonel Mayell Mbaye reported that while rapes, harassment, and hijacking of civilian vehicles continued, the general security situation was "relatively calm," except for significant incidents in Sector 6 (northern Darfur):
-- August 1: GOS forces reportedly used helicopters to

attack an IDP camp, which, if true, would be a violation of the May 5 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), Mbaye said.

-- August 5: At the request of GOS and SLA Minni forces, AMIS sector headquarters had agreed to restrict AMIS operations in the Kutum area, due to an ongoing joint GOS-SLA Minni operation. Mbaye reported that the GOS had deployed two battalions of reinforcements to protect Minni forces from anticipated attacks by Wahid.

-- August 7: SLA Wahid forces armed with artillery and anti-aircraft weapons mounted on LandCruisers, along with National Redemption Front (NRF) fighters, attacked SLA Minni forces at Saiyah; in response, GOS aircraft had bombarded the village, Mbaye said. Neither side was giving AMIS information on what had occurred.

-- MILOB sites throughout Sector 6 were now on high alert, Mbaye said, in response to a gathering of SLA Wahid fighters who were suspected of seeking to attack them.

¶4. (SBU) Pressed for additional details, Mbaye said, "the situation does not allow AMIS to go to the sites." Canadian and EU poloffs noted that these constituted serious incidents and a deterioration of the security situation. Mbaye replied that Sector 6 was only one of eight in AMIS's area of operations (AOR); the remainder of the AOR remained "relatively calm," he said.

CONCERN ABOUT GOS-MINNI JOINT OP

¶5. (SBU) Referring to the reported joint GOS-SLA Minni

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operation in Kutum, UK poloff questioned whether GOS and SLA Minni forces had in fact informed AMIS that DPA violations would occur, and whether AMIS had decided to overlook them. DITF POLAD Dr. Solomon Gomes responded that according to an August 8 AMIS situation report, Minni forces had attacked a village and were awaiting reinforcements from Nyala; the GOS then bombed the village, he said.

¶6. (SBU) Gomes recalled that at the August 3 DPA Joint Commission meeting in Addis Ababa, GOS rep General Adabi had underscored the necessity of punishing non-signatories to the DPA. The GOS was "deliberately trying to sabotage this process" by attacking non-signatories, Gomes added.

¶7. (SBU) In contrast, Gomes said, in a report to AU Peace and Security Commissioner Ambassador Said Djinnit, AMIS Darfur mediator Ambassador Sam Ibok had noted the urgent need to make contact with non-signatories. Ibok argued for sustained engagement with non-signatories to encourage support for the DPA, Gomes added, and had recently met with six factions, including G-19 and the newly established "G-14" faction led by Abdulrahim Mousa. Factions were now becoming their own armed groups, Gomes said. Commenting on Abulwahid's recent ejection from the SLA, announced by 25 SLA leaders, Gomes noted that Abulwahid still had support in IDP camps.

¶8. (SBU) Gomes said that while Minni Minawi had been appointed special assistant to the GNU president, Amb. Ibok had underscored that AMIS had provided transportation for Minni to attend a meeting only on an exceptional basis, as the UN had not been available. Gomes observed that continued GOS use of white helicopters created confusion, as GOS military helicopters were mistaken for AMIS aircraft. AU DITF Administration Control and Management Center Chief Commodore Binega Mesfin noted that the DPA called for AMIS to provide non-military logistical support to DPA

signatories. Canadian embassy special advisor objected, noting that such parties were not in compliance with the DPA.

DPA IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

¶9. (U) Individuals named to bolster the DPA Implementation Team (DPAIT) had been identified, but their appointment was awaiting approval by Commissioner Djinnit, Gomes said. He added that the USG had helped provide two offices for the DPAIT, anticipating the need to provide office space for rebel movements.

¶10. (SBU) As for the GOS plan to disarm the janjaweed, Col. Mbaye said the AU was still waiting for the GOS to submit its revised plan. Responding to the observation that the GOS had established a commission for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) in June, Mbaye explained that the DPA's call for a specific GOS plan to disarm the janjaweed was separate from a global plan for disarmament that was to include JEM and other parties. UN representative Major General Henry Anyidoho noted that the disarmament of the janjaweed was supposed to precede the assembly of movements in specific areas.

¶11. (U) Commodore Mesfin announced that Japan had pledged USD 8.6 million to support the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC), whose budget totaled USD 60.5 million. The Japanese pledge would be used for the DDDC secretariat, he said. EC representative observed that the EU may be able to provide additional funds; UK poloff underscored the need for a single AU point of contact for funding issues, as Khartoum and Addis Ababa did not always coordinate fully. Mesfin said a summary of pledges made at the July 18 AMIS pledging conference would be distributed shortly (forwarded to AF/SPG).

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AU AND TCCS UNCLEAR ON AMIS FUTURE

¶12. (SBU) Partners recommended resuming meetings of the Technical Committee chaired by Commodore Mesfin and tasked with implementing joint assessment recommendations to improve AMIS; partners noted the committee had not met since April. In response, Mesfin recommended merging the committee's work with implementation of recommendations made by the more recent June 2006 joint UN-AU technical assessment mission. Dr. Gomes noted that the implementation roadmap, listing concrete steps to strengthen AMIS, was awaiting overdue input from AMIS officials in Khartoum.

¶13. (SBU) "This mission now is logistics-driven," Mesfin said, but it was "unclear what direction we are taking." It was uncertain whether AMIS would continue or withdraw after its current mandate ended September 30, he said; the current focus was now on implementation of the DPA. AU DITF was preparing an "exit strategy" on logistics which he expected to be available by the end of the following week, he said. Mesfin questioned the viability, for example, of constructing new police stations were AMIS to terminate, as AMIS was not now fulfilling police functions under its current concept of operations (CONOPS). Partner representatives noted that Norway would coordinate donors interesting in funding police stations.

¶14. (SBU) Dr. Gomes said he had hoped the AU Peace and

Security Council (PSC) would meet to discuss the CONOPS for strengthening AMIS by two battalions, but none had been scheduled. "For me, it's business as usual" until the PSC decided otherwise, he said. Gomes observed that GNU Vice President Salva Kiir accepted transition to a UN operation, while President Bashir had not.

TCCS CONSIDERING THEIR FUTURE

¶15. (SBU) Gomes expressed concern that several troop contributing countries (TCCs) were considering withdrawal rather than rotation; he criticized a push to get TCCs to accept that the UN would be present but that AU would be out. He expected the AU would organize a meeting with both TCCs and partners prior to the next PSC meeting. Mesfin said AU DITF had been instructed to prepare operational and logistical contingency plans, in order to brief TCCs and partners, prior to submission to the PSC. Mesfin acknowledged that the United States sought to terminate AMIS in October, whereas the UN insisted on transition in January.

¶16. (SBU) AMIS needed to continue with its plan to rotate current troops in October, Col. Mbaye said, as a June 28 UN report underscored that transition would not occur until January. Even if transition were to occur in October, he said, rotation should proceed, as some troops had been deployed to Darfur for as long as seven months. DITF Chief of Staff Major General Henry Anyidoho noted that the failure to rotate troops who had served for "unduly long" periods had hurt ECOMOG's efficiency. Anyidoho said that the UN did have a CONOPS for its mission, as a result of the joint technical assessment mission conducted in June; the only issue remaining was to obtain Sudan's consent, he said. He observed, however, that the GOS was now blocking equipment meant for the already established UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) addressing the North-South conflict, fearing that it would be used by the UN in Darfur; even the entry of AMIS communications equipment continued to be blocked by the GOS telecommunications agency, he said.

¶17. (SBU) NATO Senior Military Liaison Officer discussed the proposed rotation schedule for AMIS forces, noting that the first movement was due to occur

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September 1. As the first rotations were to be conducted via commercial charter (vs. milair), rescheduling them would be expensive, he said. As the first six movements were all to be conducted by NATO, it would seek the AU's approval for them within the next few day, he said. Col. Mbaye noted that a Joint Forward Movement Cell would be established within the following week.

¶18. (SBU) Note: On August 17 partners and AU officials (Peace and Security Director Mugumya, Gomez, and Force Commander Ikhere) met with TCC representatives who agreed to move forward with scheduled retotations. End Note.

UPDATE ON COMMAND AND CONTROL

¶19. (SBU) Col. Mbaye reported that the appointment of one of two Zambian candidates to serve as Joint Chief of Staff for AMIS Forward Joint Mission Headquarters (FJMHQ), originally proposed in June, still awaited Commissioner Djinnit's approval. Partners expressed their shared concern at the delay, especially as six

partner experts from the USG, EU, and UN, requested by the AU to serve as advisors to the FJMHQ, had all been deployed. Mbaye said the AU Commission had sent a June 27 memo to the AMIS Force Commander reminding him of the decision to establish a FJMHQ under the AMIS Deputy Head of Mission; Gomes announced that another reminder would be sent to the Force Commander.

PAE CONTRACTUAL ISSUES

¶20. (SBU) Poloff raised USG concern about several issues relating to contractor PAE; in response, Mesfin and Gomes stated:

- an Antonov aircraft leased by a PAE subcontractor had not been grounded arbitrarily by an AMIS sergeant; rather, Sudanese civil aviation authorities had grounded the aircraft for safety reasons, as the PAE subcontractor was substituting car batteries for aircraft batteries. PAE had since replaced the aircraft, Mesfin said, and an investigation of the incident was underway.
- AU DITF had finally responded with a counterproposal to PAE's June proposal that the catering subcontractor Amzar be paid a higher rate to compensate for the US dollar's depreciation against the Sudanese dinar; Mesfin said the counterproposal would not raise the budget for AMIS.
- of USD 8 million owed by the AU to PAE for invoices through April, AU DITF did not accept USD 3.9 million in equipment costs, and requested that PAE provide itemized unit costs for the amount.

¶21. (SBU) COMMENT: Both African Union and EU Military Representative officials have previously discussed a de facto military alliance between Government of Sudan forces and those of SLM/A Minni Minawi; the AU's August 10 acknowledgement that AMIS suspended activities near Kutum due to a joint request by GOS/SLM Minni forces was viewed by some concern by allied partners, notably the UK and Canada. Reports of continued aerial bombings should also generate concern as violations of the DPA, but in the absence of a functioning Joint Commission, there is no mechanism to hold parties accountable. END COMMENT.

WILGUS